

Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani
Janet Bramley

DATE: July 12, 2002

RE: Gender Gap

Earlier this week (Monday July, 8, 2002) the Boston Globe published a front-page story entitled "Special ed gender gap stirs worry: Some say boys singled out for wrong reasons" (http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/189/metro/Special_ed_gender_gap_stirs_worry+.shtml). This week's PIP examines Vermont's emotional behavioral and mental health caseloads in light of the findings presented in this article.

The Globe reported that, in Massachusetts during FY2000 boys were twice as likely as girls to be in special education and that boys were 3 times as likely as girls to be called emotionally disturbed. In Vermont, these figures are almost identical for the same year. Boys are 2.3 times as likely as girls to be in special education and 3.1 times as likely to be called emotionally disturbed (EBD) (Figure 1, Table 1).

There are substantial regional differences in these boy/girl ratios in Vermont, as there are in Massachusetts. In Addison County, boys were 4.9 times as likely as girls to be on the special education EBD caseload, and in Lamoille County, boys were 4.7 times as likely as girls to be on the special education EBD caseload. The lowest boy/girl ratio for EBD was in Bennington County, Vermont, where boys were 2.5 times as likely as girls to be on the special education EBD caseload (Figure 2, Table 1).

The Globe also reported that boys, nationally, were 3 to 4 times more likely than girls to be diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This pattern has held in Vermont's DDMHS Children's Services programs for the past five years, but from 1992 to 1995, boys were at least 6.4 times as likely as girls to be diagnosed with ADHD (Figure 3, Table 2). Interestingly, the number of Children's Services clients diagnosed with ADHD increased from 135 in 1989 to 893 in 2001. This 561% increase can be compared to a 157% increase in the total number of youth aged under 18 on the Children's Services caseload during this period.

The Boston Globe discussed these gender discrepancies in terms of under/over identification of cases, developmental differences between boys and girls, and academic problems. We will be interested in your ideas about these differences in male and female participation in special

education and mental health programs in Vermont. We will also be interested in your suggestions for further analyses of these (or other) data that could help us to better understand these differences in utilization patterns. As always you can reach us by e-mail at pip@ddmhs.state.vt.us or by calling 802-241-2638.

Vermont Special Education Services Ratio of Boys to Girls by Region: FY2000

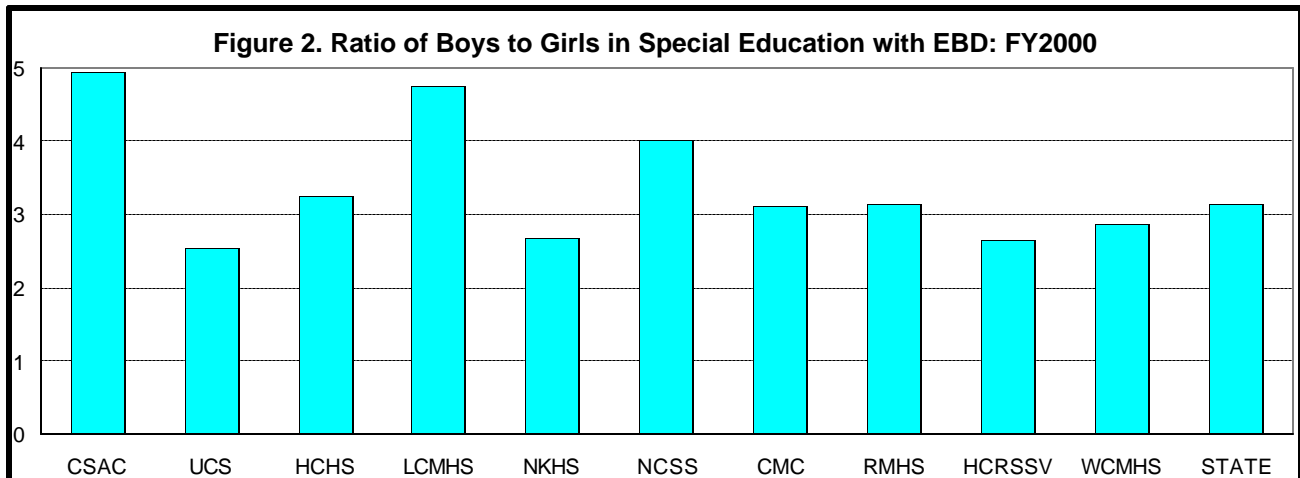
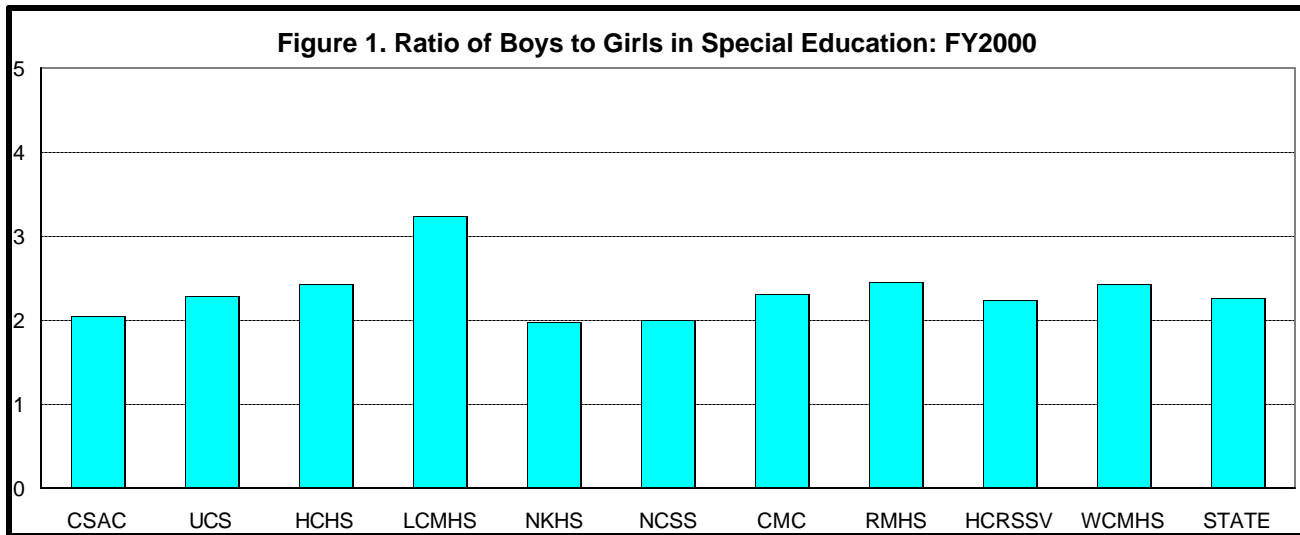


Table 1. Ratio of Boys to Girls by Region

Region/Provider	Special Education Students				Special Education Students with EBD			
	Total	Boys	Girls	Ratio	Total	Boys	Girls	Ratio
				(Boys/Girls)				(Boys/Girls)
Addison - CSAC	706	473	233	2.0	89	74	15	4.9
Bennington - UCS	890	618	272	2.3	145	104	41	2.5
Chittenden - HCHS	2,366	1,674	692	2.4	411	314	97	3.2
Lamoille - LCMHS	453	346	107	3.2	86	71	15	4.7
Northeast - NKHS	1,192	791	401	2.0	176	128	48	2.7
Northwest - NCSS	1,215	809	406	2.0	155	124	31	4.0
Orange - CMC	791	551	240	2.3	123	93	30	3.1
Rutland - RMHS	1,145	813	332	2.4	165	125	40	3.1
Southeast - HCRSSV	1,987	1,372	615	2.2	243	176	67	2.6
Washington - WCMHS	1,081	765	316	2.4	158	117	41	2.9
Statewide	13,077	9,062	4,015	2.3	1819	1378	441	3.1

Children's Mental Health Services

Boys and Girls Aged under 18 with ADHD Diagnosis: FY 1989 -FY2001

Figure 3. Ratio of Boys to Girls with ADHD: FY1989-FY2001

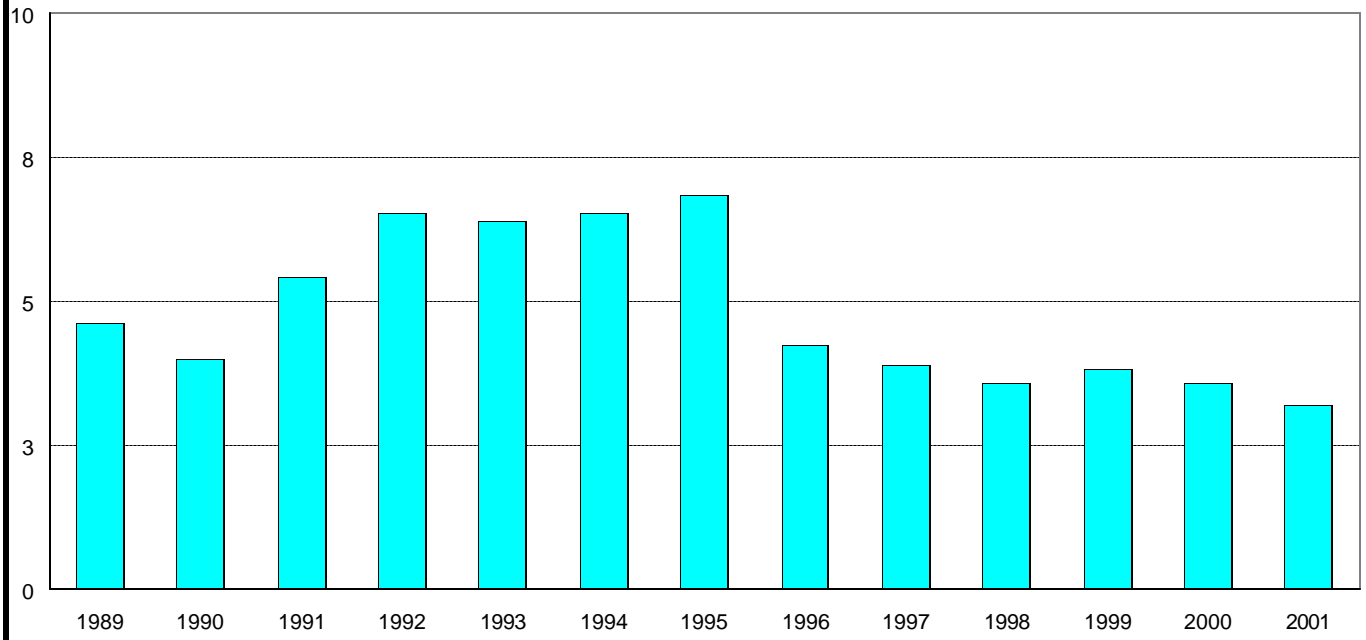


Table 2. Ratio of Boys to Girls with ADHD

Year	Total Served	Youth with ADHD Served by Children's Services Programs			
		Total	Boys	Girls	Ratio Boys/Girls
1989	3091	135	111	24	4.6
1990	3260	115	92	23	4.0
1991	3411	148	125	23	5.4
1992	3843	196	170	26	6.5
1993	4293	252	218	34	6.4
1994	4722	316	274	42	6.5
1995	5402	455	397	58	6.8
1996	6511	721	584	137	4.3
1997	6759	826	657	169	3.9
1998	6676	859	672	187	3.6
1999	6908	805	638	167	3.8
2000	7774	902	706	196	3.6
2001	7948	893	681	212	3.2